

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Slovenia: Minority Integration through Entrepreneurship

Announcement Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Title:	FY 2016 Notice of Funding Opportunity for NGOs : Minority Integration through Entrepreneurship, Slovenia
Funding Opportunity Number:	DOS-PAS-SLO-2016-001
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:	19.040
Funding Amount:	\$100,000
Expected Period of Performance:	09/20/2016 – 09/30/2017
Key Dates:	Announcement published June 21, 2016 Deadline for Applications August 20, 2016 Anticipated Award Date Sept. 20, 2016 Anticipated Project Completion Date Sept. 30, 2017

Executive Summary:

The U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Slovenia announces the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for a new program whose goal is to empower minority women entrepreneurs in Slovenia to create value for themselves, their communities, and Slovenia as a whole. The program will support the following activities: Design and implement a competition to identify and select 20 to 30 promising minority women entrepreneurs; design and implement a yearlong program of workshops, training, networking, mentorship, and motivation; design and implement a capstone week-long seminar; design and administer a competitive process for seed funding micro-grants for participants; recruit, select, and train a core group who will receive additional “train the trainer” training to replicate the methodology of this project after its formal conclusion; recruit and coordinate travel of American expert speakers to inform the program.

Eligibility for this NOFO is limited to: Slovenian educational and research institutions, public entities, and not-for-profits/NGOs/social enterprises.

One grant in FY 2016 Public Diplomacy D&CP Funds will be awarded under this NOFO.

The initial period of performance will be for 09/20/2016 – 09/30/2017. Funding authority rests in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

All applicants should be familiar with OMB Circular 2 CFR Part 200.

Please read the entire NOFO package before submitting an application, and follow the steps immediately in order to submit before the deadline. Applications that do not meet

the eligibility criteria and do not contain all of the required information will not be considered.

Program Description

A. Funding Opportunity Description

i. Background

Slovenia: Minority Integration through Entrepreneurship is a new program with the goal of empowering minority women entrepreneurs in Slovenia to create value for themselves, their communities, and Slovenia as a whole. The program will support the following activities: Design and implement a competition to identify and select 20 to 30 promising minority women entrepreneurs; design and implement a yearlong program of workshops, training, networking, mentorship, and motivation; design and implement a capstone week-long seminar; design and administer a competitive process for seed funding micro-grants for participants; recruit, select, and train a core group who will receive additional “train the trainer” training to replicate the methodology of this project after its formal conclusion; recruit and coordinate travel of American expert speakers to inform the program.

ii. Program Goals

1. Select and support a group of 20 to 30 promising minority women entrepreneurs
2. Design and implement a series of workshops to inspire and educate participants
3. Facilitate the development of participant business plans
4. Implement a micro-grant competition to seed fund the most promising proposals
5. Create a small group trained to replicate the project in the future using local funds

iii. Main Activities

The heart of the program will be a yearlong schedule of once per month workshops, training or networking sessions, focused on key issues in entrepreneurship including but not limited to mentorship, motivation, business plan development, financing, and others. The program will conclude with a capstone week-long seminar.

iv. Expected Results and Performance Indicators

B. Federal Award Information

i. Available Funding and Legislative Authority

The source of this funding is D&CP (PD) Funds.

ii. Summary of Award Information

Type of Award:	Cooperative Agreement
Appropriated Fiscal Year of Funds:	FY2016

Approximate Total Funding:	\$100,000
Approximate Number of Awards:	1
Anticipated Award Date:	Sept. 20, 2016
Anticipated Project Completion Date:	Sept. 30, 2017

iii. Deadline

Deadline for Applications:	August 20, 2016
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C. Eligibility Information

Applications by applicants which do not meet the eligibility by the time of an application deadline will result the application not being reviewed.

1. Eligible Applicants: Slovenian educational and research institutions, public entities, and not-for-profits/NGOs/social enterprises.
2. Cost-Sharing or Matching – encouraged, but will not be a factor for consideration in the panel review criteria. Applicants should show any cost share in the budget proposal.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

Public Affairs Section
U.S. Embassy Ljubljana
Attn: Grants Program
Prešernova 31
1000 Ljubljana
Tel: (1) 200-55-00
Fax: (1) 426-42-84

In addition, please send one copy in electronic form to the following address: LjubljanaNGOGrants@state.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please read the entire NOFO and follow the guidelines for proposal preparation below. Applicants must include the following in the proposal submission. **All submissions must be in English.**

1. Table of Contents that lists application contents and attachments (if any);
2. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A and SF424B, as directed on www.grants.gov. The Certifications and Assurances that your organization is agreeing to in signing the 424 are available at

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>;

3. If your organization engages in lobbying activities, a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form is required;
4. Proposal Narrative (not to exceed 10 pages, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font in Microsoft Word, at least one-inch margins), following the structure described below. The proposal narrative should identify inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the proposal activities, timelines, and any qualitative or quantitative targets, and impact.
5. Summary and detailed Budget in USD, in Excel, using the format shown in the budget template;
6. Detailed Budget Narrative (not to exceed 6 pages) that includes an explanation for each line item in the spreadsheet, as well as the source and description of any cost share offered;
7. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan detailing how the project's impact and effectiveness will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project, using the attached template.
8. Attachments may be included, (letters of commitment from the applicant institution and sub-award partners, CVs of key personnel, project experience, etc.) but should not be unreasonably lengthy; see NOFO for details on required attachments, if any;
9. If your organization has a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a pdf file;
10. A PDF file copy of your organization's most recent financial audit;
11. Number all pages, including budget and addenda;

Applicants under consideration for an award will likely be subject to a pre-award survey to determine fiscal responsibility and ensure adequacy of financial controls. This survey contains a list of criteria for determining whether the applicant's accounting system meets the minimum standards to be eligible for USG funding. These standards include appropriate accounting software and written financial management policies and accounting procedures. The pre-award survey will involve assessing the extent to which these are in place within an organization and being actively implemented.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and SAMS

The System for Award Management is a U.S.-government wide registry of vendors doing business with the U.S. federal government and requires annual renewal. The system centralizes information about grant applicants/recipients, and provides a central location for grant applicants/recipients to change organizational information. More information about SAM.gov and useful guides for setting-up a new account, updating an existing account, or renewing an expired account can be found at:

<http://statebuy.state.gov/fa/Pages/SAMInfo.aspx>. Foreign-based applicants are strongly encouraged to review these guides when creating an account with SAM.gov.

Each applicant is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM.gov before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The Department of State may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier

and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department of State is ready to make a Federal award, DOS may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

Further, applicants must maintain an active account, with current information, while its application is under consideration for funding. To keep an active SAM.gov account, applicants must renew it at least once each year. If an organization's account expires, the organization cannot submit a grant application until it is renewed.

4. Submission Method and Dates

Completed applications should be submitted electronically through

LjubljanaNGOGrants@state.gov. Please follow all NOFO instructions carefully and start early to ensure you have time to collect all of the required information.

All applications must be submitted by August 20, 2016. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered, unless a late filing has been approved in advance by the Department of State.

5. Funding Restrictions: The following activities and costs are not covered under this announcement:

- Construction is not an allowable activity under this award.
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns;
- Direct support or the appearance of direct support for any religious organization, to include repair or building of structures used for religious purposes.
- Military assistance of any kind, including weapons buy back or rewards programs.
- Purchase of firearms, ammunition, or removal of unexploded ordnances.
- Para-police (i.e., militias, neighborhood watch, security guards) and prison-related projects. This restriction includes no funding of any secondary need in a law-enforcement organization.
- Payments for any partner government, military or civilian government employee salary or pension.
- Vehicle purchases to include motorcycles. (However, farm equipment, such as small tractors, and transportation costs will be considered.)
- Duplication of services immediately available through municipal, provincial, or national government.
- Funds for market research, advertising (unless public service related to grant program) or other promotional expenses.
- Expenses made prior to the approval of a proposal or unreasonable expenditures will not be reimbursed.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

Proposal Narrative:

Budget:

i. Criteria Components

- 1. Executive Summary:*
- 2. Organizational Capacity and Past Performance:*
- 3. Program Strategy:*
- 4. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation:*
- 5. Management Plan:*

ii. Budget Components

- 1. Budget Appropriateness:*
- 2. Cost-effectiveness:*

2. Review and Selection Process

The Embassy strives to ensure each application receives a balanced evaluation by a Review Panel. All applications for a given solicitation are then reviewed against the same criteria, which includes quality of project idea, project planning/ability to achieve objectives, institution's record and capacity, cost effectiveness, multiplier effect/sustainability, and project monitoring and evaluation.

Evaluators will judge each application individually against the following criteria, listed below in order of importance, and not against competing applications.

Quality of Project Idea

Applications should be responsive to the NOFO, appropriate in the country/regional context, and should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Embassy's goal of empowering minority women entrepreneurs in Slovenia to create value for themselves, their communities, and Slovenia as a whole. The Embassy prioritizes innovative and creative approaches rather than projects that simply duplicate or add to efforts by other entities. This does not exclude projects that clearly build off existing successful projects in a new and innovative way from consideration. If your organization is already implementing a similar project, an explanation should be provided as to how new activities will

not duplicate or merely add to existing activities and how these efforts will be coordinated.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives

A strong application will include a clear articulation of how the proposed project activities contribute to women's and girls' empowerment, the overall project objectives, and each activity will be clearly developed and detailed. A comprehensive monthly work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and the logistical capacity of the organization. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable results-focused and achievable in a reasonable time frame. If applicable, applications should identify target areas for activities, target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, and the specific roles of sub-awardees, among other pertinent details.

Partnerships and Engaging Stakeholders

Applications should address how the project will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate. If local partners have been identified, the Embassy strongly encourages applicants to submit letters of support from proposed in-country partners. Applicants should describe mechanisms to build partnerships and engagements with women's associations, local community based organizations, women's organizations, international NGOs, international organizations, diplomatic partners, the private sector, and others critical to the shared aim of women's empowerment. Additionally, applicants should describe the division of labor among the direct applicant and any local partners.

Institution's Record and Capacity

The Embassy will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Applications should demonstrate an institutional record, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives.

Cost Effectiveness

The Embassy strongly encourages applicants to clearly demonstrate project cost-effectiveness in their application, including examples of leveraging institutional and other resources. However, cost-sharing or other examples of leveraging other resources is not required and does not need to be included in the budget. Inclusion in the budget does not result in additional points awarded during the review process. Budgets however should have low and/or reasonable overhead and administration costs and applicants should provide clear explanations and justifications for these costs in relation to the work involved. All budget items should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate its necessity, appropriateness, and its link to the project objectives.

Multiplier Effect/Sustainability

Applications should clearly delineate how elements of the project will have a multiplier effect and be sustainable beyond the life of the grant. A good multiplier effect will have an impact beyond the direct beneficiaries of the grant (e.g. participants trained under a grant go on to train other people, workshop participants use skills from a workshop to enhance a national level election that affects the entire populace, project outcomes can be championed by others aside from direct implementers). A strong sustainability plan may include demonstrating continuing impact beyond the life of a project or garnering other donor support after the Embassy funding ceases.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Complete applications will include a detailed plan (both a narrative and table) of how the project's progress and impact will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project. Incorporating a well-designed monitoring and evaluation component into a project is one of the most efficient methods of documenting the progress and results (intended and unintended) of a project. Applications should demonstrate the capacity to provide objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes and engage in robust monitoring and assessment of project activities.

The Review Panel includes representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana. Additional panelists from other Department of State bureaus or offices may participate, including the Office of Global Women's Issues.

Review Panels may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

3. Designated Performance and Integrity System (currently FAPIIS)

The Department of State, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

The applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

The Department of State will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

F: Federal Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

The grant shall be written, signed, and awarded by the Grants Officer and administered by both the Grants Officer and the Grants Officer Representative. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the Recipient through either mail or facsimile transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Furthermore, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

2. Administrative and National Policy

Prior to submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications that will apply to this award to ensure they will be able to comply. The terms and conditions are available on the State Department's procurement website at: <http://fa.statebuy.state.gov/>

Applicants should also be familiar with the OMB circular that will apply to this cooperative agreement: OMB Uniform Guidance: Cost Principles, Audit, and Administrative Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, Part 200, et al.)

3. Reporting Requirements

The Recipient, at a minimum, shall provide financial, progress, and final reports. Please note that all substantiating documentation supporting reporting and data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Department of State upon request. All reports must be written in English.

i. Financial Reports

The Recipient is required to submit quarterly financial reports throughout the project period, using Form FFR SF-425, the Federal Financial Report form, as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative. Form FFR (SF-425) can be found on OMB's website here: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/. Financial reports are due 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter.

ii. Progress Reporting

While the grantee will be in frequent contact with the Embassy Ljubljana concerning the project details, the grantee is required to submit quarterly program progress reports using page 1 of Form SF-PPR Performance Progress Report, which can be found at OMB's website http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative (GOR). Embassy Ljubljana will provide a reporting template. Progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the quarterly reporting period.

iii. Final Report

The final report will be due no later than ninety days after completion or termination of all project activities. The Final Report shall include the following elements: executive summary, successes, outcomes, how the project has increased science capacity in the regions selected and addressed the other goals of the project, and a final financial report.

G: Agency Contact

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should email them to LjubljanaNGOGrants@state.gov. Note that once the NOFO deadline has passed Department of State staff in Washington, D.C. and overseas at U.S. Embassies/Missions may not discuss this competition with applicants until the review process has been completed.